

REMARKS

In the outstanding Official Action, claims 1-13, 15-28 and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over MACNAUGHTON et. al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,796,393) in view of JUNKIN (U.S. Patent No. 6,193,610).

The examiner has responded to the "dynamically entered" amendment, which she previously had encouraged during the personal interview, by relying upon col. 8, lines 33 – 42. The passage describes having different profiles for different communities, canceling community memberships and automatically becoming a member.

Applicant respectfully traverses the above-noted rejection. Upon entry of the present amendment, claims 1, 5, 8, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 20, 23, 26, 28 and 30 will have been amended. Applicant respectfully submits that none of the amendments to the claims add new matter to the application.

Claims 1, 15, 16 and 30 have been amended to define the dynamically entered information as "user-entered text messages that are dynamically updated by the users." Claims 13, 15 and 28 recite a feature that "selection of a plurality of members" is accepted, and that a "temporary user list that includes membership information about a plurality of selected members" is created.

Claims 5, 8, 11, 12, 20, 23, and 26 have been amended to recite that "membership information stored in the storage device is updated based on user input when one of the users desires to update as the result of changed circumstances".

In contrast to the invention recited-in applicant's claims, MACNAUGHTON is limited to a basic Who's Online search that only returns a list of members currently online. MACNAUGHTON does not describe the more sophisticated search capability of the claimed invention. The new passage relied upon in the outstanding Official Action to show searching dynamically entered information

does not describe user-entered messages that can be searched. In this regard, the membership profile of MACNAUGHTON et al. is not searched, regardless of whether the user has a different profile for each community, whether they can cancel membership, or whether they can automatically become members.

Further, col. 8, lines 19-23 of MACNAUGHTON disclose that a "member of a community may also interact and communicate with other community members who have similar interests or shared circumstances by initiating synchronous communications such as chat or conferencing." Thus, MACNAUGHTON teaches that the mere fact that two members are in the same community is sufficient to determine that they have shared circumstances or similar interests. Accordingly, MACNAUGHTON does not recognize the need for an additional search capability to refine and focus the degree of similarity. Rather MACNAUGHTON teaches that the problem of finding relevant users is solved because members are already in the same community, and does not provide the advanced search capability provided by the claimed invention.

Further, MACNAUGHTON discloses, at col. 15, lines 46-48, that search features define the membership search results as an array of user names of all users matching search criteria. However, the only search criteria is described at col. 14, lines 45 – 49, as a list of users currently logged into the community. Col. 9, line 40 is consistent, and indicates that community membership can be searched. There is no mention or suggestion in MACNAUGHTON of searching for more than whether someone is a member of the community and online. In contrast, at least claims 1, 15, 16 and 30 require searching dynamically updated user entered membership information.

Further, claims 13, 15 and 28 recite the creation of a "temporary user list that includes membership information about a plurality of selected members". MACNAUGTON does not disclose or suggest any similar feature, and the

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portions of MACNAUGHTON applied in the Official Action as disclosing these features have nothing to do with creating a temporary list of users based upon the search results.

Applicant respectfully submits that at least the above-noted features of claims 1, 15, 16, and 30 are not disclosed or suggested by MACNAUGHTON. Further, the above-noted features, which are not disclosed or suggested by MACNAUGHTON, are also not disclosed or suggested by JUNKIN; nor does the outstanding Official Action assert that the above-noted features are disclosed or suggested by JUNKIN. Accordingly, at least for each and all of the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of at least claims 1, 15, 16 and 30 over MACNAUGHTON is inappropriate and unsupported by the combination of references applied in the outstanding Official Action.

Accordingly, applicant respectfully submits that each of claims 1, 15, 16 and 30 is allowable over the combination of references applied in the outstanding Official Action. Applicant further submits that each of claims 2-13 and 17-28 are allowable at least for depending, directly or indirectly, from an allowable independent claim, as well as for additional reasons related to their own recitations.

Accordingly, applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-13, 15-28 and 30, at least for each and all of the reasons set forth above.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Any amendments to the claims in this amendment that have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kazutoyo MAEHIRO

Alan M. Lenkin  
Reg. #40063

  
Bruce H. Bernstein  
Reg. No. 29,027

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GREENBLUM & BERNSTEIN, P.L.C.  
1950 Roland Clarke Place  
Reston, VA 20191  
(703) 716-1191